

Exhibit A-letters

MEMORANDUM

Thursday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024; 3:34 PM

USA v. Ray Small – Interview with Ted Ginn Sr.

On or about the above date and time, a telephone interview was conducted with Coach Ted Ginn Sr. as part of our mitigation investigation into the case of Ray Small whom we are representing in US District Court. Coach Ginn was at one point a football coach and longtime mentor of Ray and took him into his home when he had no other place to turn to for shelter. The purpose of this interview is to gather insight from Coach Ginn regarding Ray from the perspective of a character witness in preparation of Ray's sentencing hearing in Federal Court.

Coach Ginn offered some background information about Ray along with his parents whom he states are now both deceased. To begin with, I asked Ginn to describe the type of athletic prowess Ray displayed on the football field. Ginn said Ray was a world class sprinter and a prospect for the NFL. Ray was susceptible to negative influence at an early age, notably at the hand of his father. Ginn described Ray's father as a sort of "slick conman" who would often exert control over Ray in various ways, attempting to groom him in his own vision as a conman. Ginn firmly believed Ray and all other young men like him require structure and that Ray's father sought to undo any of the structure and routine Ginn and his wife instilled in Ray during his stay with the Ginn family.

Ginn stated Ray was taught to regularly pushed to make his bed each morning, get up early for school and perform all of the necessary tasks for a well-functioning young adult life. Ginn instilled in Ray a sense of personal accountability that was opposed by Ray's father. Ginn said Ray often joked by remarking "*I didn't have any trouble makin' my bed in jail every morning because I already learned that at the Ginns'...*" Ginn remarked that as Ray's father began to notice Ray's true potential as an athlete and someone who had a chance of escaping a negative environment so many young men his age get swept into, his father stood his ground as Ray's father. This resulted in tension between Ginn and Ray's father as the two men butted heads over what was best for Ray. Coach Ginn and I discussed Ray's father's motive for derailing Ray's success. Ginn believed Ray's father was insecure of Ray's potential to outdo and surpass his father. Furthermore, Ray's father sought to exploit his athleticism and take the initiative of contacting recruiters which Ginn felt was inappropriate, given Ginn's efforts to raise Ray.

I asked Ginn where he believed Ray would be by now if not for being under the influence of his father. Ginn was certain Ray would have had a career as a professional football player in the NFL by now. I also asked Ginn what positive impact Ray had on those around him and his community. Ginn assured me Ray had a vested interest in helping younger men in the community correct their ways with respect to the law before they venture down a dark path they cannot turn back from. Ginn remarked about how he feels it is crucial to have that level of influence on the younger generation, opining that as the years have gone by, it has only become harder to reach the younger generations of today and instill some sense in them.

I thanked Coach Ginn for his assistance in this case and the insight he offered regarding Ray. Additionally, I asked if Ginn would consider being available to appear in court at any of Ray's future hearings to speak on his behalf to attest to Ray's character. Ginn stated he had no issue doing that, further adding, "*I'd do that for all my kids*". Ginn reiterated how happy he would be to contribute to Ray's defense and advocacy. Again, I thanked Coach Ginn for his time and wished him the best, concluding the interview shortly thereafter. No further relevant information was divulged during this interview.



—SKY SHARMA, INVESTIGATOR

To the Honorable Chief Judge Marbley,

Hello and I hope my message greets you well. My name is Que'Air Daniels. I am Raymond A. Small's life partner. Together we share 2 small sons. To complete our beautiful blended family, we support and guide his older children. Raymond and I have journeyed this life together for the past 14 years. Since meeting in college, Raymond and I are blessed to share core memories of life together. Navigating through adult-hood, parenthood, grief and trauma are some of our roots of becoming who we are today. Raymond and I are building a life together that we're very much grateful for, but also becoming more aware of how our life experiences and decisions are grooming our future. A future that we see becoming married, living as active civilians, being humble givers and positively impacting our families. Raymond is my support system. Raymond is my person, whom I believe I was blessed to journey this life with. I accept the responsibility of growing with Raymond. During our spiritual conversations we speak about the importance of playing bigger roles in this life. Raymond is the leader of the family we're creating. Raymond established a foundation of genuine love and support. With this absence of Raymond our home has drastically shifted. Raising structured children and sustaining our family business are areas where I feel the strongest effects of not having Raymond's presence.

Raymond is a determined man. I've witnessed him learn through his life challenges, suffer from his inexcusable choices and I still believe in him. I am writing this letter your honor to give a glimpse into what my home is missing. Over the past year, both Raymond and myself have had to reflect on what led us to this moment. Raymond has had to accept the responsibility of his actions and weigh them against who he needs to become. During this time Raymond has been away, the impacts of his poor choices have played a significant part in his current mental health. Together we push each other to stay encouraged. In our current conversations, we plant seeds about positively impacting our communities.

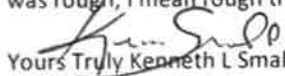
Honorable Chief Judge Marbley, I thank you for taking your time to receive my brief words dedicated to represent Raymond. As I mother our children I can only be honest of how this experience has traumatically shifted my family. This moment changes our family's future. Raymond is the root and foundation to the legacy our family is building. For the sake of my mental well being and for my family, the idea of a miracle is the only space I can allow my mind to live. I'll end my letter with gratitude. I believe Raymond will receive the opportunity to redefine his role as the leader he's created to be and quickly return to his family with learned lessons and new positive direction.

QueAir Daniels

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'QueAir Daniels', written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dear, Your Honor

Hello, my name is Kenneth L Small Jr. Raymond's oldest sibling I'm writing this letter in hopes that it will lighten his sentence. I truly believe that locking Raymond up in a box for number of years really won't prove anything other than a simple punishment that would really affect a whole generation of people @ this point he has 5 children that needs their father 2 that live at home with him 2 young men in training with no man in site will be hard to accomplish any goals. I know he made his bed he must lay in it I understand that but on a lighter note I think Ray needs sum therapy and sum classes to help him cope with his traumatic childhood as well as losing our parents over the last few years. It's hard cause I'm speaking from experience not having your creators here to help guide u can be difficult even as an adult more times than not most times only your parents have your best interest. I hope that u can find a space in your heart for Raymond I know his actions and crimes are a little extreme & I honestly think he just got caught up in a situation this not even him I've been knowing him his whole life and I've never seen him handle a gun let alone out here selling them. This is not who is this man is. He is 1 of the most compassionate, respectable, honorable people I know with a heart of gold. So, I'm pleading with you that u give him a 2nd chance for the sake of the children so we can break this cycle because I know what it's like to growing up with my dad in the penitentiary multiple times throughout my childhood and it was rough, I mean rough them boys of his don't deserve that.

  
Yours Truly Kenneth L Small Jr

Dear Judge Algenon Marbley,

Thank you for reading this. I don't know the details of this case or the context in which this letter will be used. But I do have the blessing of knowing Ray, and I'm happy to help give insights regarding him that I hope help in your decision-making process.

Ray has been going out of his way to support me since before I even met him. I met him almost 20 years ago when I was still a young child. To me he seemed like a celebrity. My older cousin's boyfriend. It felt like everyone knew him or wanted to know him, so I was shocked when he went out of his way to talk with me. He asked me about school, my favorite sports, and what my hobbies were. Starting with that small conversation, our relationship grew. Over the years he's helped me through many important life decisions, showing up to encourage me or redirect me exactly when I needed it.

When I was finishing high school and applying for colleges, I was torn between attending a school close to me where I knew I would excel, or taking the risk of leaving home to face a challenge I'd never seen before. When I talked with Ray about it, it was as if he already knew what my dilemma was. He told me about his experiences, the lessons he learned in college, and was vulnerable enough to tell me about mistakes he made and give me insights about how to best avoid them. Most importantly he encouraged me. He called out qualities that I didn't even know I had and gave me the confidence to reach for a new height. Using that momentum, I accepted my offer to New York University and went on to serve as the commencement speaker at my University graduation. Without Ray, I wouldn't have made that decision to attend to begin with.

As much as I've learned from Ray through personal interactions, I've learned even more through observing him. He has shown me what it means to be a caring and engaged parent. Every time I see him, his young sons are climbing all over him and asking him questions. I've never seen him turn them away or even ask them to be quiet. He answers every question and gives them assurance. At family events or out in public when arguments have come up or conflicts boil over, I've seen him be a peacemaker. He's never the loudest person around, but his presence is strong and I've observed him use that to help bring comfort to the people around him.

In retrospect, I've realized that even though it seemed like it, he wasn't just magically showing up at the perfect time or coincidentally knowing the right thing to say. In reality, he's been keeping tabs on me. Talking with family members, watching my actions, and paying attention to my journey. He's known the advice to give because he considered it before I even asked. And the most impressive thing is that I know he does the exact same thing for everyone who depends on him. His children, his wife, his siblings, best friends, etc...

Again, I'm not aware of the details of this case, but I'm fully aware of the person involved and I'm thankful to know him. I ask that you be graceful in your decision. The thing I've learned most from Ray is the value in using your personal experiences to help others. The reality is that many people in our community face similar challenges and could end up in a situation similar to what Ray is facing now. And some need more redirection than others. I know that he has already been changed by this experience, and the critical difference is that Ray has the humility, reputation, and wisdom to help guide others away from these pitfalls. He's already done it for me. I pray that he has the freedom, agency and support to do this now and in the future.

Thank you,  
Christopher Hearn

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Chris Hearn", written in a cursive, flowing style.

Hello Judge Algenon Marbley,

My name is Shana Small I am the sister of Raymond A.Small I am writing this letter in hopes it will allow you to look at the person Ray is and not the Offenses he is charged with.

I will start off by saying Ray is a warm hearted funny person that has 5 children 3 boys 2 girls that he loves dearly. As children we grew up in a Family that was loving but didn't have a lot of money, my parents were always together when we were young as my father was in & out of prison, I believe we learned that it was ok to hustle, including me I am a Felon as well. Since childhood we lived in poverty areas that wasn't the best, Ray graduated from high school and was the 1 child to go to college where he played for Ohio State, I'm sure you knew this. I want you look at him as a person who has a heart of gold and love people. Throughout his life he has never been a violent person **although he hasn't made the best decisions in life, he did start a cleaning business with the mindset of being able to leave something for his children, I believe when our parents died it changed him for the worst...he found our mom (2017) when she died & also found our father (2019) we he died also. As our heart aches through this journey with him, I am not looking for sympathy but, I believe he at least deserves a chance to redeem his life with his children. If that means being close to his family in Ohio while he does his time it will greatly be so appreciated.**

Thank you for allowing me to express what I think will help you look at Ray as the funny loving brother, I know him to be.

Ms. Shana Small

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'SS' followed by a long horizontal stroke.



Dear Honorable Judge Algenon Marbley,

My name is Robert Rose Jr. I'm an alumni of The Ohio State University. I have a Bachelors in Fine Arts and I am currently a substitute teacher in Cleveland, Ohio. I've been friends with Raymond Small for over two decades. Actually we are more like brothers. Blood wouldn't make us any closer. As far as character goes, I've never met a person with more than Ray. He has been there for me during the darkest moments of my life. We've been through a lot of similar things together. We've been roommates, teammates, classmates, recruited by The Ohio State University, and last but not least we have been through the devastation of falling short of our life long dream of making it to the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio. Our trajectory was through the roof. Even though we made it to the NFL, we didn't accomplish the

things that we set out to accomplish when we were teenagers.

It seems that we are still stumbling through this thing called life. Personally, I'm still healing mentally and physically after football. I'm still trying to figure life out. Not many people understand what it feels like to be an elite athlete your whole life. We put all our eggs in one basket with the hopes of making it out of poverty. We put every ounce of ourselves towards a dream that ultimately became a nightmare that we had to wake up from. Imagine studying to become a doctor, go to med school, do your residency, become a doctor, then one day the hospital tells you they found someone better. They don't need you anymore. How would you feel? What would you do? How would you provide for your family?

What Raymond did was wrong. We all make mistakes. But the goal is to be able to come back from the mistakes. To learn from them. Sometimes, our mistakes are too big to come back from. I hope he can come back from this mistake. He is truly a genuine person. I'm convinced He learned his lesson. I see myself when I look at Raymond. All I humbly ask is that you show empathy during sentencing.

Thank You

Robert Rose Jr